

This Power Point is about the punctuation marks:

COLON :

SEMI COLON ;

BRACKETS ()

HYPHEN -

DASH —

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

Punctuation helps a reader
understand both the
rhythm and meaning of a
sentence.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

COLON :

A colon has several main uses:

1. To signal a list
2. To show an explanation
3. To add emphasis
4. To signal a quotation

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

COLON :

1. To signal a list

The soup had many unusual ingredients: frogs' legs, snails, squid and beetles.

The t-shirts are available in a variety of colours: orange, blue, green, yellow and red.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

COLON :

1. To signal a list

The section before the colon should be a main clause (it should make sense on its own).

The bag contained: one catapult, two packets of chewing gum and a small penknife.

The bag contained the following items: one catapult, two packets of chewing gum and a small penknife.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

COLON :

2. To show an explanation

This wasn't what she had expected: the room was empty.

main clause

explanation

The section following the colon should be an explanation of the main clause.

One thing was on her mind: revenge.

main clause

explanation

The explanation can be a clause or just a word.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

COLON :

3. To add emphasis

There is one thing you need to know: never touch that button.

A colon adds emphasis by causing the reader to pause.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

COLON :

3. To add emphasis

Compare these sentences:

If there's one thing in the world that I can't stand, it's lumpy custard.

There's one thing in the world I can't stand: lumpy custard.

Kerry had no time to lose because the bomb was about to explode.

Kerry had no time to lose: the bomb was about to explode.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

COLON :

4. To signal a quotation

PC Andrews explained: “Incidents of speeding cars have been reduced since the cameras were installed”.

A colon is used to introduce a quote.

Professor Jones, an expert in the subject, believes that: “Flooding could become a significant problem in the area”.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

SEMI-COLON ;

A semi-colon has two main uses:

1. To link two main clauses
2. To separate items in a list

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

SEMI-COLON ;

1. To link two main clauses

The weather was awful; Billy wished he had worn a scarf.

main clause

main clause

Both clauses should be main clauses (they should make sense on their own).

Olivia wore a blue hat; which her father had given her.

main clause

subordinate clause

Olivia wore a blue hat; her father had given it to her.

main clause

main clause

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

SEMI-COLON ;

1. To link two main clauses

The weather was awful; Billy wished he had worn a scarf.

Both clauses should be closely related to each other.

Olivia wore a blue hat; she was walking to school.

about her hat

about what she's doing

Olivia wore a blue hat; her father had given it to her.

these clauses are both about the hat

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

SEMI-COLON ;

1. To link two main clauses

The weather was awful; however, Billy still went outside to play.

A semi-colon can be used before a sentence
connective.

The weather was awful; therefore, Billy wore his wellies.

It is forecast to rain all week; consequently, there are many flood
warnings around the county.

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SEMI-COLON ;

1. To link two main clauses

Note the difference between a **colon** and a **semi-colon**

The weather was awful: it snowed everyday.

this main clause explains the first clause:
why was the weather awful?
because it snowed everyday

The weather was awful; Billy wore his wellies.

this main clause is closely related to the first
clause but it isn't an explanation

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

SEMI-COLON ;

2. To separate items in a list

Usually, we use a comma to separate items in a list:

Jane bought flour, eggs, sugar and butter.

If, however, the list contains more complicated items, a semi-colon can be used:

The visitors came from all over the world: Peter Jackson from London; Joyce Reynolds from Dublin; Mac Angst from Vienna; Carol Sinistre from Rome.

The following are some of my favourite boardgames: *Backgammon*, a very old game of luck and strategy; *Power Grid*, a German game about power stations; *Lost Cities*, a two-player card game; and *Ticket to Ride*, a game in which you build railways across Europe.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

BRACKETS ()

Brackets (also known as parentheses) allow a writer to interrupt a sentence by adding extra information.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

BRACKETS ()

In the Autumn months, picking up leaves (not my favourite activity) can take hours.

The information in the brackets is not essential. The sentence makes sense without it.

In the Autumn months, picking up leaves can take hours.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

BRACKETS ()

The information in the brackets may be practical:

Chapter Four (pages 70 to 86) covers the build up to the war.

Further down the street was a wonderful *gelateria* (ice-cream shop).

In the crash, the bike's rear derailleur (the device for changing gears) was severely damaged.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

BRACKETS ()

The information may provide opinion:

I've seen many changes (most of them for the better) take place.

My sister (who can never stop talking) kept the crowd entertained with a long story about her hamster.

You can make your own (though why bother?) or buy them from most large supermarkets.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

DASHES —

Dashes work in a similar way to brackets: they allow a writer to interrupt a sentence by adding extra information.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

DASHES —

The car was —according to the news— travelling at twice the recommended speed limit.

The information between the dashes is not essential.
The sentence makes sense without it.

The car was travelling at twice the recommended speed limit.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

DASHES —

Clarinet, swimming kit, homework —I've got a lot to carry today.

Unlike brackets, a writer can use a single dash.

I knew the facts perfectly —until test day!

It was a hot day —the hottest of the year.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

DASHES —

Opening Hours: Monday — Friday, 9:00 — 5:30

A dash is also used to show a range between one thing and another.

Exercises 12 — 13, pp. 73 — 45.

The Bath — London train route is not yet electrified.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

DASHES —

A **dash** — is longer than a **hyphen** -

He was twenty-nine years old.

The mouse —with a rather smug look on its face— scurried back into the hole.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

HYPHEN -

A hyphen joins or separates words or parts of words. It has several uses:

1. In some compound words
2. In some words with prefixes
3. Writing numbers

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

HYPHEN -

1. In some compound words

The break-in occurred on Saturday morning.

Mr Davis made sure the up-to-date report was on her desk.

The good-looking boy sat next to Linsey.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

HYPHEN -

1. In some compound words

A hyphen is not always necessary when writing compound words:

There were nine children at the play group today.

There were nine children at the playgroup today..

There were nine children at the play-group today.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

HYPHEN -

2. In some words with prefixes

The coin looked pre-Roman.

The meal was a self-service buffet.

A hyphen can help to clarify meaning:

We wanted to re-cover the area with concrete.

We hope you recover soon.

You are learning about... PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —

HYPHEN -

3. Writing numbers

What is three-quarters of twenty-four?

You are learning about... **PUNCTUATION MARKS : ; () - —**

SUMMARY

- > **COLON** signals a list, a quotation or an explanation or adds emphasis
- > **SEMI-COLON** links one main clause with another or separates complex items in a list
- > **BRACKETS** and **DASHES** add extra information into a sentence
- > **HYPHEN** joins words or parts of words